DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 428 CS 209 615

AUTHOR	Bennett, Susan G., Ed.
TITLE	Food for Thought: An Annotated Bibliography.
INSTITUTION	Texas Univ., Austin. Dept. of Curriculum and Instruction.
PUB DATE	85
NOTE	65p.; Publication of the Texas Hill Country Writing Project.
AVAILABLE FROM	Texas Hill Country Writing Project. National Writing Project, Education Building 406, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712 ($5.00).
PUB TYPE	Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Content Area Writing; Creative Writing; Language Usage; Teaching Methods; *Writing Apprehension; Writing Difficulties; Writing Improvement; *Writing Instruction; *Writing Processes; *Writing Research; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Texas Hill Country Writing Project

ABSTRACT

Most of the 24 books reviewed in this annotated bibliography concern writing and are recent publications (1980-1985). Titles and authors are as follows: "Teacher" (Sylvia Ashton-Warner); "What Did I Write? Beginning Writing Behavior" (Marie M. Clay); "Composing: Writing as a Self-Creating Process" (William E. Coles); "Right Brain...Write On! Overcoming Writer's Block and Achieving Your Creative Potential" (William L. Downey); "If You're Trying to Teach Kids How to Write, You Gotta Have This Book!" (Marjorie Frank); "Language Connections: Writing and Reading across the Curriculum" (Toby Fulwiler and Art Young); "Writing in the Schools--Improvement through Effective Leadership" (Allan A. Glatthorn); "Writing: Teachers and Children at Work" (Donald Graves); "Writing in the Content Area" (Sherry Hill Howie); "Look, Think, and Write" (Hart Day Leavitt and David A. Sohn); "A Vulnerable Teacher" (Ken Macrorie); "Teaching the Universe of Discourse" (James Moffett); "A Writer Teaches Writing" (Donald Murray); "Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program" (George Nemetz); "The Lively Art of Writing: Developing Structure" (Lucile Payne); "The Lively Art of Writing: Effecting Style" (Lucile Payne); "The Lively Art of Writing: Understanding Form" (Lucile Vaughn Payne); "Teaching as a Conserving Activity" (Neil Postman); "Prospect and Retrospect" (Gordon M. Pradl); "Balancing the Hemispheres: Brain Research and the Teaching of Writing" (Gabriel Rico and Mary Frances Claggett); "Sequences in Writing, Grades K-13" (Gail Siegel, et al.); "Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School" (Theodore Sizer); "Mastering Basic Vocabulary" (William Strong); and "The Great American Writing Block: Causes and Cures of the New Illiteracy" (Thomas C. Wheeler). (EL)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

ED267428

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Susan G. Bennett

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CS209615

1985

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Introduction

Two basic goals of the Texas Hill Country Writing Project and the National Writing Project are: 1. to encourage teachers to respect and integrate theory, research and practice; 2. to encourage teachers to become more incisive readers and writers. To promote those goals and, at the same time, to provide a service for other busy educators who, like us, find their greatest obstacle to reading, writing, and thinking is lack of time, we (THCWP) published our first annotated bibliography of writing resources last year. Positive responses spurred us on to continue the effort this year resulting in Food for Thought.

With few exceptions, the twenty-four books reviewed are recent publications (1980-85) concerning writing; all are of interest to writers and teachers. Two of the texts not entirely about writing (Teacher, Ashton-Warner, 1963; Teaching as a Conserving Activity, Postman, 1979) are, nonetheless, assuming their places as "classics" in education. Therefore, we reviewed them from "contemporary eyes" and a writer's perspective to see how they are standing the tests of time. Two other "oldies-but-goodies" (If You're Trying to Teach Kids How to Write...., Frank, 1979; A Vulnerable Teacher, Macrorie, 1974) have also been chosen for review for similar reasons; finally, Moffett's 1983 edition of Teaching the Universe of Discourse is included though we hope no one needs to read our review to spend time, effort, and perhaps money, to become acquainted with his ideas.

Traditional to Texas culture is the cafeteria. For many Texans from all walks of life, eating at the cafeteria is a ritual that few Northerners know about. Therefore, we in the Texas Hill Country Writing Project feel a particular kinship to the idea of an annotated bibliography or menu, if you will, to guide others through the cafeteria line of references. As long as resources on writing and composition instruction continue to proliferate, we intend to continue our reviews. So much is good and we hope to make a busy teacher's choices easier.

Our title, Food for Thought extends the analogy that a teacher's professional life is like a smörgasbord. There are so many books to be read, methods to be tried, instructional materials to be 'tasted' that the richness of possibilities can be paralyzing rather than satisfying. Lest anyone feel too full, too glutted, too sated to savor and appreciate the best our profession has to offer, we hope to have identified some titles to make the picking less overwhelming.

With our belief that this bibliography represents the best of teachers helping teachers, we offer you our recommendations and reviews.

Susan

Susan G. Bennett - Director
Texas Hill Country Writing Project
Summer, 1985

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....i

Ashton-Warner, Sylvia. Teacher. (Linda Kennedy).....1

Clay, Marie M. What Did I Write? Beginning Writing Behavior (Jeanne Black).....4

Coles, William E. Composing: Writing as a Self-Creating Process. (Marilyn Arnold).....8

Downey, William L. Right Brain...Write On! Overcoming Writer's Block and Achieving Your Creative Potential (Sharon F. Peltzman).....10

Frank, Marjorie. If you're trying to teach kids how to write, you gotta have this book! (Kathleen Stegall).....12

Fulwiler, Toby and Art Young, eds. Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum. (Gary Smith)..15

Glatthorn, Allan A. Writing in the Schools -- Improvement Through Effective Leadership. (Sabrina K. Youngs).....18

Graves, Donald. Writing: Teachers and Children at Work. (Marianne Eck Perez).....20

Howie, Sherry Hill. Writing in the Content Area. (Monica Primrose).....22

Leavitt, Hart Day and David A. Sohn. Look, Think, and Write. (Craig A. Russell).....25

Macrorie, Ken. A Vulnerable Teacher. (Laurel Haworth).....27

Moffett, James. Teaching the Universe of Discourse. (Kathy Major).....29

Murray, Donald. A Writer Teaches Writing. (Linda Miller).....32

Nemetz, George. Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program. (Mary Macina).....35

Payne, Lucile. The Lively Art of Writing: Developing Structure. (Joan Hickman).....38

Payne, Lucile. The Lively Art of Writing: Effecting Style. (Jan Lindstrom).....40

Payne, Lucile Vaughn. The Lively Art of Writing: Understanding Form. (Nancy Sawyer).....42

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Postman, Neil. Teaching as a Conserving Activity. (Patti Jurena).....45

Pradl, Gordon M. Prospect and Retrospect. (Ellin D. McShea)....48

Rico, Gabriele and Mary Frances Claggett. Balancing the Hemispheres: Brain Research and the Teaching of Writing. (Pat Gordon).....51

Siegel, Gail, et. al. Sequences in Writing, Grades K-13. (Sharon McKinney).....53

Sizer, Theodore. Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School. (Carolyn Ellis).....55

Strong, William. Mastering Basic Vocabulary. (Emily Kahler Hutchinson).....58

Wheeler, Thomas C. The Great American Writing Block: Causes and Cures of the New Illiteracy. (Eve S. Scherr).....61

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Teacher by Sylvia Ashton-Warner. Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1963. (Reviewed by Linda Kennedy, Third Grade, Austin I. S. D.)

The author of this book has presented her methods of teaching reading and writing as used with the Maori children in the classrooms of New Zealand. This classic was originally published with five printings in 1963; however, I find her educational philosophies as current today as when she originally wrote about them.

Ms. Ashton-Warner sees each child as a volcano with two vents - creative and destructive. It is her belief that the more the creative vent is expanded the more the destructive vent is diminished. She proceeds to describe various activities and techniques she uses to widen the creative vent.

Her reading program begins with the use of a key vocabulary - words of and from the children and the world in which they live. She uses the word "organic" to describe that which comes from the inner world of the Maori child. She says, "First words must be already part of the dynamic life and first books must be of the stuff of the child himself, whatever and wherever the child."

The key vocabulary centers around the two main instincts of the Maori children - fear and sex. Each child generates his own words adding a new one weekly. Oral practice with this

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

vocabulary written on large cards is followed by other mediums of expression with the same words.

Creative writing extends the one-word captions to sentence length and story length captions. From this point in the development of the writing process the students begin biographical writing. Their self-chosen vocabulary remains with them and a general vocabulary springs from their writing. As their capacity increases, they write two sentences about themselves and their lives, then three, until six year olds are writing a half page and seven year olds a page or more a day. This author does not call this teaching; she calls it creativity since it all comes from the student and nothing from her.

The emphasis of this author on the organic teaching of reading, writing and art is stimulating and gives a starting point for instructing students in any ethnic culture. She feels it is just as easy for a teacher, who gives a child a brush and lets him paint, to give him a pencil and let him write, and to let him pass his story to the next one to read. The organic foundation is based on progressing from the known to the unknown - from the inner world to the outside - from a native culture to a new.

Current authors, Ken Macrorie and Peter Elbow are certainly

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

in agreement with the philosophies of this book - children must write from what is within. Ms. Ashton-Warner's creative techniques are condoned by Jeffrey Shrank in his book, Snap, Crackle and Write. Her methods have withstood the test of time. It is easy to see why the book, Teacher, has become a classic .

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What Did I Write? Beginning Writing Behavior by Marie M. Clay. Heinemann Educational Books, ref. 1984 edition. (Reviewed by Jeanne Black, grade 5, Austin Independent School District.)

The author conducted research of five-year-old children's writing samples and used this data to make statements of what their writing seemed to imply. The examples in this book illustrate some of the insights a child gains during his first contacts with written language and some of the points at which he can become confused.

Instruction in handwriting is not the theme of the book; rather the emphasis is placed on the child's gradual development of a perceptual awareness of the arbitrary customs used in written English. It tries to make apparent the diverse difficulties faced by individual children. When a child is confused, his school progress will be halted or hampered.

The aim of the book is to help first year teachers develop skills of observation and analysis to better understand the acquisition process. They will be able to question their own instructional strategies in relationship to their individual strengths and to the individual differences of their pupils.

Clay presented a comprehensive analysis of the concepts and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Generating Principle

When a child learns how to combine or arrange words he will be able to generate a variety of sentences (Here is... I like...). The idea of the substitution of words within grammatical structures is a basic feature in language. Inventing sentences is more acceptable to the young learner over the laborious technique of copying.

Reversing The Directional Pattern

Mirror writing occurs when a child has selected a starting point on the right-hand edge of the page. When a child feels his writing may run off the edge he reverses his entire pattern of directional movement.

The Contrasting Principle

Children who make rapid progress in learning to read are able to contrasts between shapes, meanings, sounds, and word patterns.

The Space Concept

A space must be used to signal the end of one word and the beginning of another. For some children it takes a long time to understand the function of the space in print.

Page And Book Arrangement

A child encounters difficulties when he cannot fit his word or his sentences on the line or page. He tends to fill in any left-over spaces which upset letter orientation and order.

The Abbreviation Principle

Better readers understand the concept of abbreviation.

principles first year teachers should be aware of as they work with young children in the area of writing. A summary of each concept and principle follows:

The Sign Concept

This is an early and easy concept to develop. Some children fail to move beyond the stage of producing signs.

The Message Concept

At this stage a child realizes what he speaks can be written down. A child hopes the message he writes down will correspond to what he is saying.

The Copying Principle

Some letters and words must be copied in a slow and laborious way to establish the first printing techniques.

The Flexibility Principle

This principle leads to the invention of new signs when the child is aware that a wide range of signs exist, but does not know what this range is.

The Inventory Principle

Clay was surprised that children five years of age do take stock of their own learning. A child remembers words that have become part of his repertoire.

The Directional Principle

This involves the movement from left to right and the return sweep, to establish the top to bottom progression.

The Recurring Principle

A sense of accomplishment is achieved if a child can repeat an action.

This principle is not significant for the early primary child.

Clay points out that teachers are helping children of similar ages who are at very different stages of awareness about written language. A list of complexities young children might encounter in written language is:

- to understand that print talks
- to form letters
- to build up memories of common words
- to use those words to write messages
- to increase the number and range of sentences used
- to become flexible in the use of sentences
- to become familiar with conventions of English.

Clay suggests first year teachers sharpen their observation of children's writing efforts. The teacher must be sensitive to children stranded at some learning hurdle.

This book was written primarily for beginning teachers; however, as an intermediate teacher I was better able to understand the complexities of beginning writing. What Did I Write would be beneficial to parents and teachers as they work with children.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Composing: Writing as a Self-Creating Process by William E. Coles, Jr.
Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc., 1983 (Reviewed by Marilyn Arnold, Second Grade, Austin Independent School District)

This book is a text to be used by students in a writing course. It is divided into thirty assignments with most of the assignments from one to three pages in length. Each assignment is a lesson in itself and is designed to move the student day by day through the course. The teacher has flexibility with the use of the lessons according to the needs of the class.

The aim of the book is to offer the student "an opportunity to become a better reader and writer." Mr. Coles attempts to do this by presenting meaningful subject matter to write about. As the students improve as readers and writers, they will at the same time be learning about language and themselves as language users.

The assignments begin with a variety of subjects to be used to stimulate the students in the writing process. The subjects range from an excerpt taken from The Autobiography of Malcolm X to an account of a student's memory of a special zoology teacher at Harvard. Other divergent subjects include: an account of an alcoholic's conversion experience, a list of virtues for self-improvement from Ben Franklin's autobiography, and a science fiction story by Lewis Padgett.

Following each stimulus there is an assortment of thought provoking questions to initiate a conversation about the subject. The teacher is given many options in which to direct the discussion. From this discourse the students can choose the focus for their writing according to what is relevant to them.

This book could be used effectively for a course in writing at the upper high school or college level, but could not be easily used or adapted for an elementary school classroom because of the subject matter. An elementary school teacher could use the philosophies presented by Mr. Coles. He believes that students write best when they can relate their own experiences to their writing. Students become better readers and writers by reading and writing. And at the same time they will be learning about language and how they use this language.

Right Brain...Write On! Overcoming Writer's Block and Achieving Your Creative Potential by William L. Downey. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1984.
(Reviewed by Sharon F. Peltzman, Austin ISD)

Anyone who is actively involved with the writing process and has experienced " writer's block " will want to read Right Brain...Write On! Overcoming Writer's Block and Achieving Your Creative Potential!

Research has demonstrated the existence of two separate brain hemispheres. The left brain, usually dominant, is linear and factual. It deals easily with routine and explicit directions. The right brain, daring and visionary, generates creativity. Reading is left brain activity whereas writing is right brain activity. Downey believes writer's block to be the inability to brain-shift from left to right. He examines this phenomena in detail and offers suggestions toward easier shifting between the brain hemispheres.

Chapters two, three, four and seven are helpful in understanding and easing the transitions between brain hemispheres. According to Downey, applying a holistic approach to one's daily living and writing will keep the right brain in easy access. Four specific activites designed to aid left to right brain transition are discussed in great detail.

Chapter eight is filled with a variety of creative writing

assignments, each of which is designed to help the blocked writer tap into the right brain potential. Utilizing these activites, the reader's motivation to write is easily sparked.

Chapters five, six and nine examine the left brain skills of editing, revising and researching. Downey's belief in right brain potential does not prevent him from acknowledging these activites as equally significant elements to the writing process.

Downey interviewed a number of famous authors about their experiences with writer's block. Chapter ten is comprised of these interview transcripts.

Right Brain...Write On! Overcoming Writer's Block and Achieving Your Creative Potential is interesting and easy to read. It would be a valuable resource to anyone who is writing.

If you're trying to teach kids how to write, you've gotta have this book! by Marjorie Frank. Incentive Publications, Inc., 1979. (Reviewed by Kathleen Stegall, Austin Independent School District.)

Marjorie Frank states in the preface that her reason for writing this book is to "PROMOTE WRITING IN ALL THE CLASSROOMS OF THE WORLD." She is concerned that in some classrooms little or no writing takes place, while in others, the writing assignments are received by groans. Another concern is centered around "accusations that college students are seriously deficient in written communication, while high school and elementary students show no mastery of basic writing skills."

This book is divided into six sections. Each section is briefly summarized in the "Owner's Manual." In addition, an explanation of how each section is best utilized is included. The "Owner's Manual" is extremely helpful as an aid to locating information quickly.

Section one is focused on "understanding and working with the writing process." The process Ms. Frank outlines involves nine stages. Simply stated, they are: motivation, impression collecting, the rough draft, re-reading for sense and readability, sharing for response, editing, mechanics check, the final copy, and the presenting. The author explains each stage and expounds on methods which can be used to reach each "stage" in the classroom.

The second and third sections of the book serve as a source of ideas. Included are suggestions on "how to succeed with kids who can't, won't or don't write", ways to combine writing with the content areas, and how to plan and design writing centers. An index of ideas that relate to various topics, as well as a bibliography of materials for teachers, is a valuable asset of this book.

Dealing with and solving writing problems is the basis for section four. Especially helpful is a list of questions and answers teachers ask about writing. Some answers I found particularly interesting dealt with grading writing assignments, "writer's block," editing, and obscene language. The author relies on "techniques, experiences and classroom-tested advice" to assist the teacher with specific problems.

Section five, "when and where to promote independent writing," discusses various types of independent writing. A step-by-step plan for developing independent writers is included, as well as a means for integrating the writing center into the classroom. Examples of writing centers conclude the section.

The final section details the "joys of teaching writing" and "a consistent reminder of the rewards that accompany writing experiences." Ms. Frank sums up her book with four significant words: "growth," relating to both teacher and student; "risk," when a student writes and creates

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

something new; "trust," in the child and in yourself; "love," for the "kids as they unfold their selves to you, to each other, to life."

Presented in a concise, straight-forward format, this book would be a valuable asset for the elementary teacher. I found a multitude of ideas and practical solutions to problems faced daily in the classroom. Ms. Frank's philosophies (called "biases" in the book) should be communicated to teachers everywhere. Her viewpoints parallel those of James Moffett, Donald Murray, James Britton and countless others, yet are presented in a practical, applicable fashion. In summary, Ms. Frank feels "kids need to be given the freedom, the support, and the tools to let their voices be heard."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum edited by Toby Fulwiler and Art Young. NCTE, 1982. (Reviewed by Gary Smith, Hays C.I.S.D.)

Language Connections is a collection of 12 articles published by the National Council of Teachers of English. The book encourages teachers in all subject areas to use writing projects to improve student writing and thinking skills. Language Connections is the result of an inter-disciplinary writing project at Michigan Technological University and all the contributors are instructors there. The ideas expressed throughout these writings also reflect the influence of the 1975 research by James Britton and his colleagues at the University of London.

Britton's work discusses various functions of language and states that student writers write primarily (95%) to teachers as their audience. The authors of Language Connections provide teachers with practical methods for broadening the range of student writing beyond the realm of simply writing to the teacher. This broadening of range in writing helps to develop language arts skills as well as thinking skills.

In the introductory chapter, Randall Freisinger provides a "conceptual framework" based on the findings of Britton, Moffett and others to say that "language for learning is different from language for informing." Freisinger also refers to the studies of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky and linguist/scientist Michael Polyanyi who both state that language is directly connected to the thinking process. From these findings, Freisinger asserts that, through the composing process, students clarify unclear thinking and must use language as "an aid to learning

not merely as an instrument for reporting."

In chapter 2 Fulwiler describes methods of using journals in history, chemistry, and business courses to generate ideas and to detect unclear understandings in these subject areas.

Carol Berkenkotter then explores the relationship between writing and problem solving based on the works of Linda Flower and John Hayes. Flower and Hayes observed strategies of novice and expert problem solvers in the field of math, physics, chess and musical composition. This chapter offers endless possibilities for teaching thinking skills through writing projects in any classroom.

Art Young, in a chapter entitled "The Poetic Function of Language" discusses the relationship between two forms of language: one that Britton calls "poetic" written to please the writer, and one he labels "transactional" written to "inform, instruct or persuade the reader." Young relates an incident in which he assigned his students to write a poem about a complicated philosophical theory. His students reported that using poetic language forced them to organize the facts of the subject matter. Writing the poem also helped them remember the material for the examination.

Throughout the book Fulwiler and Young present an excellent study for teachers across all disciplines. It offers sound theory as well as practical classroom projects. Although it is designed for college level courses, the concepts are readily adaptable to elementary and secondary classrooms. Reading through what appears at first and second glance

to be weighty theoretical information will be a beneficial endeavor for any teacher interested in improving student writing.

Writing in the Schools - Improvement Through Effective Leadership by Allan A. Glatthorn. National Association of Secondary School Principals 1981. (Reviewed by Sabrina K. Youngs, Austin I.S.D.)

Allan A. Glatthorn writes in clear concise language describing the writing process. He addresses several important issues; how to improve writing, how to evaluate a writing program, and how to supervise its instruction. "For years we taught composition primarily by instinct and intuition, operating without the benefit of sound research. Now, however, that situation has changed. We know a great deal about how students write - and what teachers can do to improve student writing." In this book, Glatthorn provides concrete assessment materials to determine what a teacher is teaching and how the process can be improved. He employs the findings from many noted researchers in the writing process; James Moffett, D.H. Graves and A. Petrosky. A complete biography is provided for the reader.

After defining the writing process, the steps for holistic assessment of student writing in your school, is given in a concrete format. There is a formal and informal evaluation tool assessing teacher practices in the writing process.

Later, chapter four specifically outlines how one can improve the composition curriculum. Easy-to-use diagrams and assessment tools are given to define the writing approach presently used in your class, school, and/or district. Definitions of the organic, mastery, cognitive based, discourse centered, and skill centered approach in writing are given to help the reader clarify how writing is actually being approached.

Interestingly, the author advocates improving writing across the curriculum. Since writing is a way of knowing, this justifies writing in all subject areas. A chart to assess writing activities in your classroom is provided.

Another very useful chapter suggests working with parents to improve student writing. Several charts deal with how to build parent support and develop parent understanding of the writing process.

The final chapter offers suggestions for improving writing in a professional sphere. Informative, brief, and concise, this chapter proves most useful for the teacher trying to promote rapport and support between the school and community.

While this book is intended for secondary principals, I found it to be a useful source for self-evaluation and improvement in the teaching of writing. It could serve as a useful evaluation/assessment guide for all levels. The short, concise format in which presented makes Glatthorn's book an ideal reference for a busy professional teacher or principal.

Writing: Teachers and Chidren at Work by Donald Graves.
Heinemann Educational Books, 1983.
(Reviewed by Marianne Eck Perez, Grade 3, Austin I.S.D.)

Donald Graves states the purpose of his book, Writing: Teachers and Children at Work, is "...to assist classroom teachers with children's writing" (p. v). Through the use of actual students and teachers in various writing situations, Graves shows the reader alternatives in conducting the writing process. His audience is specific; they are teachers, experienced or not, who wish to help children express themselves through writing. He tends to dispel many of the myths that teachers carry with them regarding the teaching of writing. The book creates the effect that the author is speaking directly to the reader. This method produces a feeling of rapport.

The book is divided into five sections, so the reader may choose the area where information is needed. Parts I and II focus on the actual classroom practices, III and IV expand on child growth and the writing process, and the final section deals with documentation of the child's writing.

By referring to actual case studies, Graves allows the reader to understand how conferences are held, how dialogue

between student and teacher takes form and progresses, and how the children themselves respond to the writing process. The scenarios were taken from studies done in a school in New Hampshire from 1978-1980. One aspect found particularly frustrating is that not all children are identified by age. When reading about those children, their writing, and the trials and errors they experienced, it would have been helpful to place them in a grade or age frame.

Throughout the book Graves focuses on the voice, structure, and information the children place in their writing. To him skills are secondary, so less attention is centered upon them. He claims they are "...the symptoms...not the actual problems..." of writing (p. 315). In order for children to become better writers, they must write daily, not periodically. Then the teacher can, when conferencing and reviewing the work, teach a needed skill in grammar or usage to that child.

Writing: Teachers and Children at Work gives the reader a basis for developing a writing program in the classroom that, with some time and effort, produces writers who become comfortable with the writing process.

Writing in the Content Area by Sherry Hill Howie. Allyn and Bacon Publishing Co., 1984. (Reviewed by Monica Primrose, Second Grade, Austin I.S.D.)

As James Moffett said in Teaching the Universe of Discourse, "To compose is to comprehend," and so every subject area can benefit its students by giving them well-planned writing experiences. The main purpose of this book, Writing in the Content Area, is to identify what the elements of written language are and how they apply to a given subject area.

This book was written for upper elementary, secondary and college-level teachers who are interested in getting feedback from their students about what information has been learned in their given subject area. It is a resource and guidebook for subject area teachers, not English teachers. Each chapter has an overview, a list of objectives, numerous student activities, assessment of the stated objectives, and a list of pertinent resources. Each chapter is easily understood and the activities seem practical and well-planned.

Sherry Hill Howie begins by stating the reasons why most subject area teachers are reluctant to incorporate writing in their fields. First, she points out that most subject area teachers have not been taught the usage of language in their field and do not feel comfortable dealing with it. Secondly, most subject area teachers feel they have enough

to grade without adding the grading of writing compositions. Most subject area teachers also feel they are not competent enough to grade these compositions. These are possibly valid reasons but we must also think of the benefit that these compositions would have on the student's ability to express themselves in the different modes.

Sherry Hill Howie next goes on to state and describe each step in the writing process. The fives steps as she sees them are (1)prewriting, (2) the initial draft, (3) preparing to revise, (4) editing the draft, and (5) finalizing the composition. This chapter, "Teaching Students the Behaviors of Writing", also goes into great detail as to how the subject area teacher should present each step with numerous activities provided for each step.

The chapter I found most applicable to elementary teachers was Chapter 6, "Teaching Vocabulary and Spelling." This chapter discussed the ways of teaching vocabulary and spelling through the writing process. It listed the three ways of teaching vocabulary as (1) providing language experiences for students to help in the transition from what they already know to what the teacher wants them to know, (2) teaching the context clues in usage of language in both oral and written forms and (3) teaching vocabulary using morphemes, units of meanings such as prefixes, roots and suffixes. Most of the activities in this chapter were

applicable to elementary teachers if they geared them down to the appropriate level.

This book is well-supplied with appropriate reproduction pages to reinforce the activities stated in each chapter. If the level of the reproduction pages is not designed for your specific grade or subject area, the ideas could be easily adapted. I would recommend the book especially for secondary subject area teachers. It is a fine means of getting into the process of incorporating writing in the subject areas.

Look, Think, and Write by Hart Day Leavitt and David A. Sohn. National Textbook Company, Lincolnwood, Illinois, 1985. (Reviewed by Craig A. Russell, 8th grade teacher, Eanes I.S.D.)

Look, Think, and Write is a writing practice book based on the idea that "to write well, you must study your world with a precise eye and interpret what you see with accuracy and imagination." Leavitt and Sohn's book uses a superb variety of black and white photographs as "springboards" for writing ideas and practice of specific skills. The idea of the book is to provide writers with vivid, tangible 'story-starters' to help them move from soft, vague writing to focused, clear writing using particular specific details.

The book is divided into twenty lessons, each focusing on different observations then transfering these to various writing topics. For example, one lesson asks the reader to list details describing the conflict shown in different pictures and then to write a description of the scene and a possible solution. Each lesson explains the new emphasis and writing device to be studied in conjunction with its pictures. Short writing samples are also presented as examples. Following this, several "Exercises for Writing" that are related specifically to the lesson's photographs provide guided practice of the lesson's main thrust (ie. humor, sensory appeals, point of view, similarities, etc.). After the collection of pictures, "On Your Own" exercises build upon the practice by applying the observation and writing

skills taught in the lesson to other situations. Restatement of the main ideas and usually a famous quotation summarize the lesson and provide an encouraging conclusion.

The book's format lends itself to structured teaching that still allows for a variety of writing topics. For effective classroom usage however, a class set would be needed to allow the scrutiny of the pictures that the observation and writing activities require. It is important to say here that this book is not just an exciting picture book that can be a basis for stories. Indeed, it does emphasize developing writers' observation skills until they note the largest and smallest of details. However, the word THINK in the title is carried over into the writing exercises as the questions guide writers to interpret and transform their observations into clear, accurate, and appropriate writing.

Look, Think, and Write probably could not stand alone as the backbone of a writing curriculum. However, as a well-organized, easy-to-read practice book for each student or as a source of writing topics for a teacher, this book can provide some of the direction, instruction, and encouragement that beginning writers need. For the teacher who would like to discover if a picture really is worth a thousand words, I recommend this book.

A Vulnerable Teacher by Ken Macrorie
Hayden Book Company, Inc., 1974.
(Reviewed by Laurel Cravey Haworth Primary Art, Austin I.S.D.)

This book is a must for every teacher genuinely concerned with students, what is truly learned in class, and not merely given back to the teacher for a test or a grade.

Ken Macrorie is such a teacher. After seventeen years as a professor of literature, communications, and writing, he made a dramatic change in his classroom approach. Gradually his students gained strength in his subjects because they wanted to. By relating academic course material to their own experiences, their new knowledge became well grounded. Through group discussion of their writing, Macrorie's classes covered important points he had formerly stressed with the lecture method. Since students drew the parallels and conclusions themselves the knowledge had, in reality, become their own.

Macrorie's chapter "Teaching Teachers" furnishes us with a candid insight to ourselves as we approach our profession. If we are to teach writing we must first write.

His conversational style and sensitive handling of a subject for which he has sincere concern make A Vulnerable Teacher valuable reading.

Teaching the Universe of Discourse by James Moffett.
Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983, 1968.
(Reviewed by Kathy Major, fifth grade, Lake Travis I.S.D.)

This is a reissued text; the original copy being published in 1968. It is unrevised and covers six areas: 1) structural curriculum, 2) orders of discourse, 3) the use of drama in writing, 4) the development of narrative writing, 5) grammar and 6) learning to write through writing.

Moffett states that "most children enter school with the full content of transformational grammar." This implies that most children have a working ability of grammar. Moffett feels the emphasis of traditional grammar structures in schools is a regression of writing skills. He emphasizes what he calls "the ultimate context" or what is commanly known as content or abstract writing ability. The writing content needs to be the focus of a writing program. Moffett describes content instruction as what is lacking in English as a school subject today.

The second chapter deals with the different orders of discourse. Moffett addresses the use of language in writing as a cognitive matter. He equates the stages of growth studied by Piaget to the levels of abstract writing. Moffett illustrates the use of abstraction in writing as a movement out of the ego-centric stage. He describes how a child may produce high levels of abstract writing but is unable to reason through the process until the stages of growth are achieved. Moffett

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

describes the consciousness of abstraction as a necessary ability before abstraction from the writer can occur. The greatest emphasis of growth is the process from the writer's self out toward the world around him.

The third chapter defines drama as raw phenomena or real life events. Drama is real life activities and reactions to those activities, happening in the present. Moffett uses drama in a comparison to narrative writing. He believes narratives are a translation of drama which has already happened. Narratives are the interpretation or abstraction of the writer. Moffett illustrates the use of drama as a growth from the dialogue through the use of a monologue. This movement is a "growing away" from ego-centrism.

The next chapter descibes the narrative as the writer telling about something that has happened in the past, which is either factual or fictional. The narrative ability of a writer corresponds with Piaget's evolution of learning. The child "decenters" from himself and becomes able to communicate through stories. A child's ability moves from his feelings and opinions to the feelings and reactions of others.

In defining grammar, Moffett describes the traditional mode as "a bedevilment of semantic confusion in writing." He used a longitudinal study by Walter Loban to illustrate grammar differences. Five reoccuring grammarical problems were discussed in depth as matters of clarity and precision in

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

communication. Moffett supports the use of grammar in the transformational mode, to evaluate the difference found in Loban's study.

Finally, Moffett endorses the method of writing to learn to write. Through writing, a child receives feedback as a result of his attempt. This feedback is usually in the form of the child's own perceptions of his work. Moffett supports the benefits of trial and error as a direct human interaction skill. The child needs support for his attempt and error to be underplayed or avoided in any teacher feedback. Moffett is against the use of textbooks in writing instruction as they give specific guidelines as patterns in writing. They also magnify any difference from the pattern as an error in writing.

I found this book full of strong theory. I feel Moffett illustrates his points well. The parallels of his theory to Piaget's work give support to his position of writing readiness. However, the actual "readability" of this book is difficult and complex. The information was useful in writing instruction but sometimes lost to the complex text.

I would recommend this book as a support reference of a writing readiness program. I would not recommend it as a workable text in the classroom.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A Writer Teaches Writing by Donald Murray. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985. (Reviewed by Linda Miller, Lake Travis I.S.D.)

"It is time to give away the secret: teaching writing is fun." In this updated version of Donald Murray's A Writer Teaches Writing, the author guides anyone interested in the teaching of writing through a very readable and useful exploration of the writing process and how that process can and should be "hard fun."

Murray acknowledges that since the initial publication of this book in 1968, "the process approach to the teaching of writing has developed from a fairly new concept to a fully accepted, practiced and researched approach to the teaching of writing." As a result, this book reflects an increased emphasis on his model of the writing process- collecting, planning, developing- with special attention given to revision and response. He bases the discussion of writing and writing instruction on several assumptions: 1) writing is a means of thinking, 2) writing is a process, 3) effective writing instruction is responsive and, 4) there is no one way to teach writing.

A Writer Teaches Writing is a nice blend of theory and practical suggestion. In the sections on collecting, or prewriting, Murray encourages the writing instructor to provide students with strategies for gathering information

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

so they may begin producing ideas for writing. He gives several examples of collection strategies such as observation, brainstorming, exploration drafts, interviews, and researching.

The next writing stage Murray discusses is planning. During this stage, the writer should be encouraged to continue collecting information, but should also begin to form a focus for the piece. Again, Murray provides the writing instructor many lists of questions and techniques to help the inexperienced writer sift through the collected information and begin to compose.

The final stage in Murray's process approach to writing is called developing, which includes drafting, editing, and revising the final paper. Murray states throughout the book that the writing instructor is to serve primarily as a responder and consultant to the writer, rather than an evaluator. He suggests individual student/instructor writing conferences are "the most effective- and the most practical-method of teaching composition." He presents a detailed discussion of how to conduct a writing conference to maximize its effectiveness. Although the conferences may work well in the college setting in which he discusses them, for the composition teacher with six classes of thirty students, weekly individual conferences might be difficult.

The final sections of this book discuss typical writing problems and suggested solutions, and how to deal with writers who have specific writing problems. Also discussed are pedagogical techniques which are effective in teaching writing, and defense strategies for those who question how those techniques could possibly be effective.

A Writer Teaches Writing is a very readable text which is a good resource for teaching ideas and strategies. Teachers of composition should find this book interesting and valuable.

Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program was prepared by the Handbook Writing Committee under the direction of George F. Nemetz. Department of Education, Sacramento, California, 1983. (Reviewed by Mary Macina, teacher, Austin I.S.D.)

This handbook was designed to provide schools with a standard for assessing the quality of their writing programs and for improving them. The book is addressed to the many people, parents through administrators, who have input into the writing curriculum; however it best serves the teachers and principals who wish to assess their campus writing programs.

The handbook is divided into five sections: an introduction, an explanation of the writing process, suggestions for implementation, guidelines for providing staff development, and a checklist for assessment of individual schools' writing programs.

The introduction provides an overview of the theory behind the basic principles of an effective writing program, reviewing the fundamental premises of the process. The explanations are concise and extensively footnoted, although some of the research cited entails sources from as early as 1935.

"The Process of Writing" discusses each step and offers sound suggestions for application. According to this hand-

book those processes are: prewriting, writing, responding to what was written, revising or reexamining what was written, editing, developing skills with the conventions of writing, evaluating, and postwriting. This section of the handbook is worthwhile reading for any serious teacher of writing.

"Implementing a Schoolwide Writing Program" maintains that to have an effective program, every teacher must use writing as a means for learning. It describes the rationale behind this principle and then provides a comprehensive list of activities to foster writing in different subject areas. It continues by pointing out that, at the minimum, a schoolwide agreement of standards and expectations should be incorporated.

The checklist section of the handbook is employed for evaluating existing writing programs and allows, by use of four statements ranging from ineffective to very effective, a method of assessing these programs. The checklist has references to specific page numbers in the text to clarify any confusion in terminology. If properly used as a springboard for discussion it can be beneficial. However, there is some potential for misusing the checklist as an improper method of teacher evaluation.

The appendix seems to consist of additional materials which are relevant to the teaching of writing, but which would not

fit elsewhere in the publication. Some of these materials are useful, such as appendix A. (How to Help Your Child Become a Better Writer) Others, however, apply only to areas of California and may not be of great use to teachers outside that state.

Since the Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program contains basic information essential to creating or revising writing curriculum, this guide has the potential for being quite useful.

The Lively Art of Writing, Developing Structure by Lucile Vaughn Payne. Follett Publishing Company, 1982. (Reviewed by Joan Hickman, fifth grade, Austin I. S. D.)

This book would be a good selection for a high school or college text. The writing is clear, concise, and easy to read. Each chapter is followed by a summary, questions, assignments, and vocabulary practice.

The first three chapters of the book are devoted to instructions for selecting a full thesis for an essay. Payne states, "you can write about literally anything...The only requirement is that the writer know enough about the subject to arrive at some kind of reasonable opinion." After formulating an opinion, Payne suggests a five-step process to "close in" on the thesis. This gives beginning writers a structured helpful method in essay writing.

Payne then moves into the structure of the essay itself. Each part (the introduction, the body, and the conclusion) is dealt with showing the purpose and ways for improvement. Payne's challenge to writers is to "remember the demand upon you is for clarity, logic, and reasonableness." Techniques for improving any part of the essay are easily found. Diagrams illustrate both the short and long essay.

In chapters five through thirteen, Payne discusses the "first steps toward style." The author gives the defini-

tion of style as being "this ability to do something difficult as though it were easy." But Payne doesn't leave the reader thinking this is a gift reserved for only the very talented, but rather that it is a technique that can be learned through discipline and practice.. This technique is a point with merit that would encourage any struggling writer. One method for improving style is for the writer to visualize what he wants to say and then put the picture into words. To give variety in making transition, the "paragraph hook" can be used. Payne's arguments for using active voice are convincing. The discussion of ways to expand the sentence give pertinent information as does the chapter on parallel structure. Throughout the book the need for naturalness in writing is stressed. One should write the way he speaks.

I found the book to be both informative and readable interspersed with bits of humor. The ideas can be incorporated into the work of both the experienced and the inexperienced writer. I would like to know Ms. Payne's writing background, but no information is given. It would be helpful to put on the cover or in a foreword that this book has the format of a text.

The Lively Art of Writing: Effecting Style, by Lucile Vaughan Payne, Follett Publishing Company, 1982. (Reviewed by Janice Lindstrom, Grade 3, Round Rock ISD).

Style makes the difference in lifeless and lively pieces of writing. Lucile Vaughan Payne tells how to make writing style more interesting, more flowing and more graceful. I felt that while many of the ideas and techniques she presented were excellent, the intended audience of the book was unclear.

No preface or foreward explained to whom the book was directed. No biographical data in the book or on the cover gave a clue to the author's background and philosophy.

The book, divided into six easily read chapters, began with a description of style and its relation to the rhythm of spoken language. In this first chapter the author made one comment about the education of the audience for whom the book is intended--someone with at least a basic knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

In each chapter the reader was to read several pages about a certain aspect of style. Then a checkpoint activity was offered which consisted of a writing exercise that was to be done using the just-discussed technique. I sometimes felt constricted by the need to do these exercises. I did the ones I liked and skipped the uninteresting or very involved ones.

Some of the exercises were excellent and if this book was written as a guide or textbook for a writing class, it would work well. There was not enough feedback after the exercises, however. "Right and "wrong" exercises were presented, but I would have liked to know for sure if my solution was considered the correct one. No answers were given.

The book did not give me any information I could use at the level I teach, but it did give me some techniques to use to sharpen my own written product. It was breezy and easy to read. The chapter "Familiar Territory" gave an excellent description of an informal essay. I would suggest that the audience of the book be a writing class for college freshmen or high school seniors.

The Lively Art of Writing, Understanding Forms by Lucile Vaughan Payne.
Follet Publishing Company, 1982.
(Reviewed by Nancy Sawyer, Fourth Grade, Round Rock I.S.D.)

The Lively Art of Writing, Understanding Forms is a light and easy-to-read student handbook on improving the writing technique. There is no preface to the book, indicating the author's credentials, the purpose of the book, or the targeted student level. An index is supplied as an easy reference for the student. After each technique is discussed, the author gives examples and experiments for the student to practice. I felt a need for more examples and an immediate follow-up of possible answers.

The author bases her book on two general themes. The first is "Writing, like talk, is something you hear. All writing is the sound of one voice speaking, and all writing can be heard." She addresses this issue from the standpoint that people desire to be heard and all readers are listeners. When a student thinks of his reader as a listener, then his writing will become better and easier. She suggests that writing is often not understood because it doesn't sound like natural talk and she supplies several methods to improve the "hearability" of the writer. To achieve natural talk in writing, the writer should vary the rhythm of his writing, read it aloud, and listen to it. If it doesn't sound right, he should keep changing it until it does sound right.

The Lively Art of Writing, Understanding Forms does not offer a complete study of the different forms of writing, as the title implies, but it does offer a concrete approach to the most common of writing situations. It could be a valuable resource for elementary teachers as well as upper-level students and teachers.

Teaching as a Conserving Activity by Neil Postman. Delacorte Press, 1979. (Reviewed by Patti Jurena, Round Rock I.S.D.)

In his book titled Teaching as a Conserving Activity, Neil Postman performs an important service for educators interested in providing students a relevant education. Postman's book offers the results of a change of perspective from his 1969 publication of Teaching as a Subversive Activity. Postman's premise for his dramatic shift is that schools are the only institution equipped to deal with our rapidly changing culture, that education is "best conceived of as a thermostatic activity" wherein the schools provide those things which the information environment least provides.

Through his direct approach and clear prose, Postman states his perspective in the first chapter, discusses major problems in the following five chapters, and offers proposals for reform in the concluding six chapters. Throughout the three sections, Postman is obviously most concerned with the following questions: which cultural influences, if not counterbalanced by schools, could render students intellectually incompetent; to what extent is the educational institute able to handle these influences; and finally, in what ways can the schools counterbalance cultural influences?

Postman suggests that schools are only the second curriculum of students and that electronic media has more influence.

Furthermore, he indicates that school curriculum follows the same format as that of the media. As a result, class length is shortened, more electives are offered, teachers become entertainers, and machines which encourage isolated learning are utilized. Since he supports a balance of the two curricula, Postman wants to see a "subject-matter-centered, word-centered, reason-centered, future-centered, hierarchical, secular, socializing, segmanted, and coherent" education. A second problem is, that since our culture is a technological one, procedure has become more real than purpose. Idealization, frustration, and demoralization is the resulting cycle. Postman suggests school's goals must be clear and realistic; schools should stop attempting goals of other institutions.

Ultimately, Postman would have schools develop a sense of coherence in studies throughout the grades. He supports a curriculum in which all subjects are presented as a stage in man's historical development. Also, he says semantics is the true "basic" in that it generates critical thought and offers students the key to learning. He supports the study of classical forms rather than the already accessible contemporary ones. In addition, one aspect of language learning to be included in the curriculum is the teaching of appropriate questioning strategies for any given subject. Finally, Postman says that since the media curriculum is nonelitist, it is the job of teachers to offer an infinite number of

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

examples of standard English. He offers a list of writers worthy of reading.

Neil Postman is a professor of media ecology at New York University. He has authored, co-authored, or edited fourteen books, and he is the editor of ETC., a journal for the study of language and symbolism. Teaching as a Conserving Activity is evidence of Postman's concern for the education of our youth. It supports a returning to the true basics of classical form and so should be read by any educator who is frustrated with permissive approaches to teaching and who is interested in preparing students to live in a rapidly changing world.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Prospect and Retrospect: Selected Essays of James Britton
Edited by Gordon M. Pradl
Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc., 1982.
(Reviewed by Ellin D. McShea, Austin Independent School District.)

Prospect and Retrospect is a collection of essays by the British writer and educator James Britton. The twenty essays selected are representative of his investigations in English language use and instruction. The reader of this book has an historical perspective of trends and theories in the field over a period of nearly three decades. Gordon M. Pradl of New York University has written an introduction that is comprehensive, yet concise. He has grouped the essays into three sections, each representing a different emphasis in James Britton's theory and work.

The first section, "Literature and the Shaping of Experience," develops Britton's view of language as a literary form. It is his conviction that literature is fundamental to language instruction in the schools and to language development and use in our daily lives. Britton states that "for the child, poetry is a primer." He further develops the concept of literature as a "construct" through which we "participate in an infinite number of lives."

The section entitled "Language and Intention" explores the ways we use language. In these essays Britton suggests

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

that acquiring skill in grammar is secondary to achievement in the expressive use of language. The speaker employs language to "interpret" his experiences and to "regulate" his actions. Britton contends that language is effective only to the extent that the speaker or writer determines his own meaning. He views reading as a means of processing information, and emphasizes the importance of having children "write about what matters to them to someone who matters to them."

The final section "Perspectives on the Profession" offers an overview of his career in education and addresses the realities of school administration and public pressures in the 1980's. Britton observes that American teachers read and apply research directly to classroom applications; whereas, British counterparts question strictly research that does not derive from classroom experience. The writer suggests that the value of research rests in the impetus to problem-solving for specific instructional settings. He looks at the recurring controversy regarding the teaching of grammar and makes a distinction between using and studying language. He suggests that grammar study is valuable only for those students developmentally capable of analysing abstract data.

James Britton recognizes that education is a public expense and therefore accountable to that public. He

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

argues, however, that no single test instrument be employed that might distort or restrict teaching or attempt to measure the whole performance of an individual child or an entire student body.

Britton avers "it is clear that teaching consists of moment-by-moment interactive behavior...that can only spring from inner conviction." He goes on to state that we are "ready to admit that what the teacher can't do in the classroom can't be achieved by any other means."

A Selected Bibliography of Other Britton Publications appears at the end of the book. These selections are listed in chronological order by publication date. The entries suggest the range and depth of James Britton's scholarship and experience, and indicate additional sources for reading and investigation.

I would recommend using Prospect and Retrospect as a reference resource.

Balancing the Hemispheres: Brain Research and the Teaching of Writing by Gabriele Rico and Mary Frances Claggett. University of California, Berkeley, Bay Area Writing Project, Curriculum Publication No. 14, 1980. (Reviewed by Pat Gordon, Hays Consolidated I.S.D.)

Teachers have always known that we all have two styles of thinking: a linear, logical way, and a holistic or intuitive way. A balanced curriculum needs to incorporate both, however, "instruction in linear, logical thinking has dominated our approach to writing"(p.v).

Sorting out composing activities by hemispheres is an inexact activity, however, recent brain research has indicated that the left-hemisphere is the dominant for most kinds of language production and recognition as well as sequential, linear thought. The right-hemisphere, on the other hand, is specialized for the ability to perceive things as a whole, spatial perceptions, and some language functions.

Correlations were made concerning Britton's modes of writing,i.e. expressive, transactional, and poetic, and hemispheric functions.Poetic appears to be mainly a function of the right hemisphere, whereas, transactional writing would largely be a function of the left. Expressive writing seems a function of both. In order to involve both hemispheric modes of thinking into the writing product, it seems helpful to be able to distinguish types of assign-

ments with relation to the dominant process involved. For instance, an essay of persuasion would expect the student to arrange information much differently than a short story or poem.

The authors provided a group of right-hemisphere activities that could be used as pre-writing exercises to help the students focus their attention. These include framing, coloring, centering, titling, shaping, and clustering. The concepts could then be expanded by the use of mandala patterns which combine the physical movement of drawing, use of color and design, and image making. Many forms of modeling were presented as an alternative way to help students imitate specific patterns that may be used in their own writing. Through all the techniques presented, we are shown how we can involve both the linear, sequential processes of the left-hemisphere thinking and the holistic, spatial processes of right hemisphere thinking.

I feel the book was concise, informative, and appropriate to the needs of teachers who are concerned with balancing the writing curriculum or interested in new ways to stimulate the relunctant writer.

Sequences in Writing, Grades K-13 by Gail Siegel, Lynda Chittenden, Jean Jensen, and Jan Wall.
Bay Area Writing Project, University of California, Berkeley, Curriculum Publication No. 13, 1980.
(Reviewed by Sharon McKinney, Grade K, Austin I. S. D.)

Sequences in Writing, Grades K-13 is a publication from the Bay Area Writing Project. James Gray relates that all of the writers in this publication "treat writing as a process which may move through several stages rather than merely as the creation of finished products to be evaluated by the teacher."

This publication is divided into four chapters. Each section depicts strategies used at particular grade levels. This format enables the reader to quickly locate appropriate information.

In section one Gail Siegel outlines the sequences of instruction for grades K-3. She explains that young writers proceed through a series of developmental stages. Ms. Siegel supplies the reader with samples of children's writing to clarify each stage of development.

Lynda Chittendon explains instruction in the intermediate grades. She says "I have developed a sequence of instruction for the teaching of composition which is not only practical and useful, but which accurately reflects what children can do!" Ms. Crittendon gives examples of

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

how students show development in writing by moving from fluency to coherence to correctness. She defines and gives examples of each of these stages. Section one and two both emphasize that all lessons should be sequential in that they have pre-writing, writing, and post-writing activities.

Section three, written by Jean Jensen, deals with sequences of instruction in grades 9-12. This chapter outlines the Las Lomas Writing Program. The author shares all the trials and tribulations she experienced in setting up this writing program. This program is based on separating writing from literature.

The final chapter gives a general outline for teaching an eighteen week course in composition. The author, Jan Wall, explains that "this is not an inflexible pattern, but just an aid to clarify the general sequence" that has been successful for her in her classes at Laney College.

Sequences in Writing, Grades K-13 is a very enlightening publication. Teachers from all grade levels will be able to find realistic strategies for teaching writing. This publication would be an asset to any professional library.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School by Theodore Sizer. Houghton Mifflin Company. 1984. (Reviewed by Carolyn Ellis, Hays C.I.S.D).

This book is an account of Ted Sizer's two year journey to high schools throughout America, and it presents a revealing picture of current school environments. Horace Smith is a veteran high school teacher who cares about his students and about learning. He knows how to teach well, but the traditional structure of the suburban high school where he works makes it difficult to do so. Horace has to compromise what he knows will work in order to meet the demands of the system.

Horace has high standards. He believes in the importance of writing and in having his students learn to use language well. Horace has five classes of fewer than thirty students each, a total of 120. (Colleagues in New York, San Diego, Detroit, and St. Louis have a school board-union negotiated "load" of 175). Horace believes that each student should write something for criticism at least twice a week--but he is realistic. As a rule, his students write once a week.

In looking at Horace's dilemma some significant observations are: From a 1981 review, "Reading, Thinking and Writing" some 10% of seventeen year olds could not really read at all. Many of those who could read could not "use" their reading. The NAEP researchers found that student's ability to think

critically and resourcefully is lamentably weak and is continuing to weaken.

Mortimer Adler writes that the skills to be acquired are: reading, writing, speaking, listening, measuring, estimating, and calulating plus seeing. The visual is as important as the others.

Jerome Bruner in his Process of Education emphasized that intuitive things must be taught and somehow school learning has devalued it.

Sizer feels that writing and teaching have much in common. Both are means to ends, not ends in themselves. The goal in both cases is the new insights of the reader and student. Like writing, teaching is science, art and craft. One is helped to be a good teacher much as one is helped to be a good writer, by coaching. One writes and has that writing criticized. One writes again, for more criticism. One teaches and is criticized. The process is incessant.

In conclusion Sizer says there are five imperatives for better schools:

1. Give room to teachers and students to work and learn in their own, appropriate ways.
2. Insist that students clearly exhibit mastery of their school work.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

3. Get the incentives right, for students and for teachers.

4. Focus the students' work on the use of their minds.

5. Keep the structure simple and thus flexible.

As a former high school English teacher who became a Dean at Harvard, he writes with clarity and perception. This book should be read by all concerned with education.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Mastering Basic Vocabulary by William Strong.
Random House, 1984.
(Reviewed by Emily Kahler Hutchison, seventh and eighth grades, Austin I.S.D.)

The aim of this exercise book, stated in the introduction, is "to help students master basic vocabulary...and simultaneously improve basic sentence skills," an obvious aid to the teaching of writing. The author equates writing with a performance by a musician, theorizing that awkward or inappropriate usage breaks the reader's concentration like a missed note strummed by a concert guitarist, ruining the relaxed mood evoked by the composition. Contending that mistakes are an integral part of practicing for a real performance, he invites the student to use his book as a guide for "private practice" before such a performance.

The introductory chapter uses detailed explanations as to what the author is attempting to lead the student to accomplish, thus answering the commonly asked question, "Why do we have to do this assignment?" Also useful, his final suggestions at the end of this chapter offer what he terms "common-sense hints," which encourage the student to concentrate on the activities, improve "sentence sense" by repeating the exercises aloud, track progress on a chart, reinforce the learned vocabulary by spotting the words in outside reading, identify vague words by using the index, and transfer learned material to the student's own writing.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The remainder of the book contains a total of twenty-six sequence exercises, each followed by a mastery quiz for evaluating student progress and an index for locating all words used. Each sequence exercise contains a vocabulary list and four basic steps: focusing on pairs of frequently confused words, studying how the words are used in context, writing a sentence that combines meanings of the words from a cluster of short sentences, and checking comprehension by writing a more challenging sentence. The lessons are effectively ordered according to the difficulty of the vocabulary. For example, "Sequence N" focuses on the difference between "sense/since" and "quiet/quite." The words are defined and used in context. The student must read the definitions and short sentences, copy them on paper, then check his/her comprehension by using them appropriately in a fill-in exercise.

Strong's basic premise seems to be that guided vocabulary practice improves student writing on several levels. First, it enables him/her to recognize commonly confused words, some of which are rather difficult homonyms. Second, it aides the student in using them appropriately in context. Third, it challenges the student to create longer original sentences and read them aloud, thereby demonstrating the theory that reading is a strong stimulus to correct writing.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The format of the exercise book provides little variety except for the vocabulary itself. Most chapters contain one black and white illustration, usually depicting the confusion centering around the incorrect usage of a word. Although Strong supplies suggestions in the initial chapter for the student's own improvement, no hints are provided for extending the lesson; therefore, the teacher is left with the responsibility for creating any enrichment activities. Even though this omission may be viewed as sinful by some, the lessons easily lend themselves to supplementary exercises, if the teacher is willing to expend the effort.

Obviously student-oriented, Mastering Basic Vocabulary may be adapted for use in the secondary grades, either as a supplement to those self-motivated students who require vocabulary enrichment and usage correction, or as a regular part of the curriculum for all, with creative activities designed by the teacher to enhance the writing abilities on every level. Since writing is as individual as any subject taught, the possibilities for using this book are as limitless as the creativity of the instructor.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Great American Writing Block: Causes and Cures of the New Illiteracy by Thomas C. Wheeler, Viking Press: Penguin Books, New York 1980. (Reviewed by Eve S. Scherr, University of Texas at Austin).

Wheeler gives as reasons for the "new illiteracy," television and other technological encouragers of passivity. He traces the history of the American language from a language that breathed with its people, to something dull and fixed, a school subject. He speaks of the "congealed spirit" of the middle-classes. "Whenever I have found a profound writing problem in a student...--it has been a problem of the psyche or soul..." (p. 17)

Wheeler moves along. He criticizes objective testing, because it takes the spirit out of learning and limits it. He describes his experiences in the Open Admissions College (CUNY) in New York City with the ghetto students. He goes from an attitude of pitying them to being in awe of their deep, exuberant spirit. We slowly become a part of this world of kids who want to learn and who write the most vivid, wise, and bittersweet prose. We get under the skin of this prose, and come to be shown how even though not always in the standard form, it is very beautiful just as it is.

Wheeler shows his students responding excitedly to American literary writing, from Twain to Malcom X to Emily Dickinson. They also use their writing to deepen their sense of themselves within their black heritage and culture.

Wheeler skillfully leads the reader into appreciating the writing-- the soul-- of the ghetto, but he is not so much a spokesman for the ghetto as he is for the American spirit, of which the ghetto is only one part. This American spirit he finds in its heritage of literature, in the freshness of the "American language" past and present. He puts the special strengths and weaknesses of his students into the perspective of the whole nation. He reminds us to take our American language and literature personally. His enthusiasm is catching. In particular, having a spiritual dimension gives this book a special message and a special power.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE